UCLA Faculty Association

News and opinion from Dan Mitchell since 2009

Tuesday, June 30, 2026

Another reminder of the dissipating Master Plan

UC President Clark Kerr hands Master Plan to Gov. Pat Brown

From CalMatters: *It soon could become much easier for California community colleges to create new bachelor's degree programs. The state's community colleges, which primarily offer certificates and two-year associate degrees, are permitted to create bachelor's degrees that fill workforce needs, but existing law allows them to do so only if they don't duplicate what's offered at California's four-year universities. Debate over what is and isn't duplication has created an ongoing turf war between the state's two largest higher education systems, with California State University campuses often objecting to new community college degrees, claiming duplication of their own programs. Amid those objections, final approvals of several degree offerings have been delayed for years.*

Now, California lawmakers are weighing legislation to clarify — and significantly restrict — when the state's four-year universities can protest new community college bachelor's degree programs. Two separate bills, Senate Bill 960 and Assembly Bill 2694, would prohibit four-year campuses from bringing objections if they aren't located in the same geographic area as the community college proposing the degree. Both bills are opposed by CSU...

Full story at https://edsource.org/2026/community-colleges-bachelor-degrees/760627.

As we have noted many times, the old Master Plan of 1960 was the product of a deliberative process, not *ad hoc* legislative efforts.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:30 AM No comments:

Labels: community colleges, CSU, legislature, Master Plan, politics

Straws in the Wind - Part 388

The Council of UC Faculty Associations

- OMB Comment-a-thon
- Defend Research Funding
- Trump admin drops appeal in AAUP et al. v. Trump
- 2025: The Year UC Faculty Fought Back and Won
- Faculty Join SB895 Rally to Save Science, Save Lives

Remaking the University

- How to Make AI Good for the Humanities (Guest Post) - 6/20/2026
- A Response to the Report on Scholarship in the Humanities and Social Sciences by One of Its Targets (Guest Post) - 6/15/2026
- We Need to Build Actual Political Support for the Humanities (Guest Post) - 6/12/2026

Higher Ed. News & Commentary

- Chronicle of Higher Education
- Inside Higher Education
- Remaking the University
- Changing Universities
- California Professor

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UC Faculty Associations

- UCLA Faculty Association
- UCSB Faculty Association
- UCSC Faculty Association
- UCB Faculty Association
- Council of UC Faculty Associations

Other Faculty Organizations

- American Association of University Professors
- California Faculty Association (NEA)
- UC-AFT

Topics

From the Columbia Daily Spectator: *Barnard plans to hire 22 full-time faculty members and not renew around 30 term faculty positions this fall, a Barnard official confirmed to Spectator. Administrators have framed the shift as part of a long-term institutional commitment to move away from contingent faculty—instructors employed on non-permanent contracts—and toward more permanent continuing faculty, who can be tenured, tenure-track, or lecturers.*

The move was necessary to accommodate Barnard's growing undergraduate population, increasing course demand, and expanding student interest in STEM areas, especially computer science, Barnard Provost Rebecca Walkowitz said in a May 4 interview with Spectator. It also comes amid broader restructuring and financial pressure at the college. However, the change has drawn criticism from a union representing contingent faculty who argues the decision was too abrupt and left some faculty unsure of their employment status...

Full story at https://www.columbiaspectator.com/news/2026/06/18/barnard-to-hire-22-full-time-professors-not-renew-around-30-term-faculty/.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:20 AM No comments:

Labels: Barnard

UC Speech Code Challenge

From the Daily Cal: *The UC system is facing a federal lawsuit over allegations that its anti-harassment policies that prohibit repeated or intentional misgendering violate some students' First Amendment rights.*

National advocacy group Defending Education argues that systemwide rules punish students for expressing their belief that "biological sex is immutable" and require them to use classmates' preferred names and pronouns. The complaint names top officials across the university and targets provisions of the systemwide Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment policy, which define repeated or intentional misgendering and deadnaming as prohibited gender-based harassment. All university employees, students and third-parties are required to abide by the policy.

The advocacy group is asking a federal court to issue a preliminary and permanent injunction barring the UC from enforcing its rules on misgendering and deadnaming — as well as any similar policies across the university — and to strike them down as unconstitutional...

Full story at https://www.dailycal.org/news/uc/conservative-advocacy-group-sues-uc-over-misgendering-policies-and-free-speech/article_e9d75985-b7cc-451d-838f-2949f090a103.html.

The actual case is at:

https://defendinged.org/lawsuits/defending-education-files-suit-against-the-university-of-california-for-unconstitutional-speech-policies/; or

politics (2544) UC (2186) UC Regents (1926) health care (1460) State Budget (1295) governor (1149) diversity (1050) UC budget crisis (983) UC-Berkeley (937) pension (664) pensions (594) admissions (576) athletics (566) tuition (542) CSU (430) transportation (404) UC-Davis (381) online education (340) UCOP (320) uc retirement (316) traffic (310) ucrp (301) audio (291) UC enrollment (285) new hotel-conference center (283) UC-San Diego (272) enrollment (264) community colleges (257) LAO (238) UC-Irvine (186) fund raising (174) UC-Santa Barbara (164) UC-San Francisco (161) UC-Santa Cruz (159) controller (155) faculty center (145) UC-Riverside (143) ballot propositions (132) CalPERS (122) UC-Merced (118) Master Plan (114) faculty pay (109) Yudof (90) UCRS retirement (62) parking (62) Faculty Association at UCLA (61) privatization (59) CalSTRS (50) copyright (36) UC Berkeley (35) campus climate survey (28) UCRS (22) Michigan Model (18) UC Merced (17) uc funding (16) Regents (15) State Contribution (14) UCOF (14) faculty recruitment (12) UC pay (7) graduate education (6) UC San Diego (5) UCpolitics (4) UC Irvine (3) teaching evaluation (3) UC Santa Cruz (2)

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Another reminder of the dissipating Master Plan

Straws in the Wind - Part 388

UC Speech Code Challenge

Don't bother to knock...

UC Retirement Savings Program(s)

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Will Harvard Continue to Lead the Charge? - Part 174

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The Climate Wasn't Right for a New Senate Committee

Pleased with Bond

Reminder: Stay Away from Wilshire

Now there is a deal

Dialog Program

https://drive.google.com/file/d/114lK6NJKkDIZgeReexEfJrKKaRS4mABV/view. This is the kind of case that the plaintiffs may well be aiming at the US Supreme Court, which - in its current iteration - would likely be sympathetic, particularly because the plaintiffs raise religious freedom issues. (Non-lawyer opinion by yours truly.)

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:10 AM No comments:

Labels: academic freedom, UC

Don't bother to knock...

...the Regents are having another closed meeting to discuss the conflict with the feds. You're not invited.

TO THE REGENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA:

Because the membership of the Advisory Group on Research and Programs Funding Legal Issues ("Advisory Group") includes five members of the Regents' Governance Committee, there exists the potential for having present a quorum of a Regents' Committee when the advisory committee meets.

This notice of meeting is served in order to comply fully with pertinent open meeting laws.

On Tuesday, June 30, 2026, there will be a Closed Session, Special Meeting of the Regents' Governance Committee concurrent with the Advisory Group to discuss Research and Programs Funding Legal Issues (Closed Session Statute Citation: Litigation [Education Code section 92032(b)(5)].)

The meeting will convene at 10:30 a.m. at 1111 Franklin Street, Oakland and adjourn at approximately 11:00 a.m.

(Advisory Group members: Regents Anguiano, Cohen, Hernandez, Matosantos, Milliken, Reilly, Robinson, Sarris, and Sures)

--

Source: https://regents.universityofcalifornia.edu/regmeet/june26/meeting-notice_federal-june-30-2026.pdf.

--

You might wonder what developments there are to discuss at this meeting. We have noted in prior posts that the "federal updates" webpage on the UC website doesn't in fact have any recent updates. It used to be the case that when you clicked on "news" on the UC website, the federal updates page was shown as an option. There is still a federal updates page:

https://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/federal-updates.

But it no longer shows as a menu option.

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No Deal (yet)
Hearing Problem?
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Denial
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Will Harvard Continue to Lead the Charge? - Part 171
Back to the Future
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"Budget" passed by deadline
More on the Assembly
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Will Harvard Continue to Lead the Charge?- Part 170
The midnight state budget deadline approaches
Slowly following the roadmap
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Joining
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Cutting Down
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This too shall pass...
Transfers
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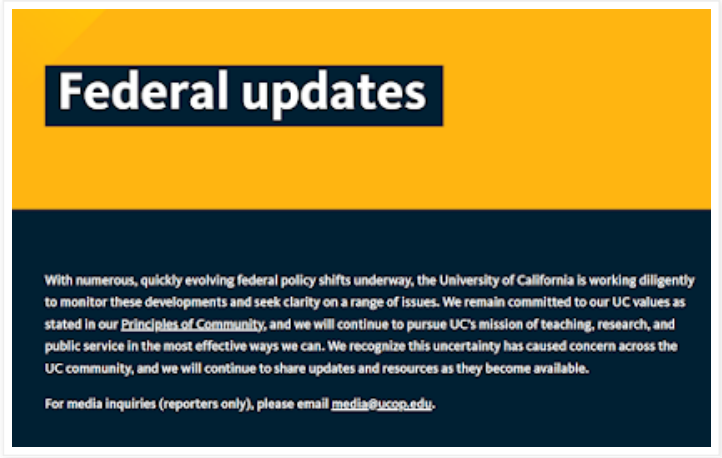
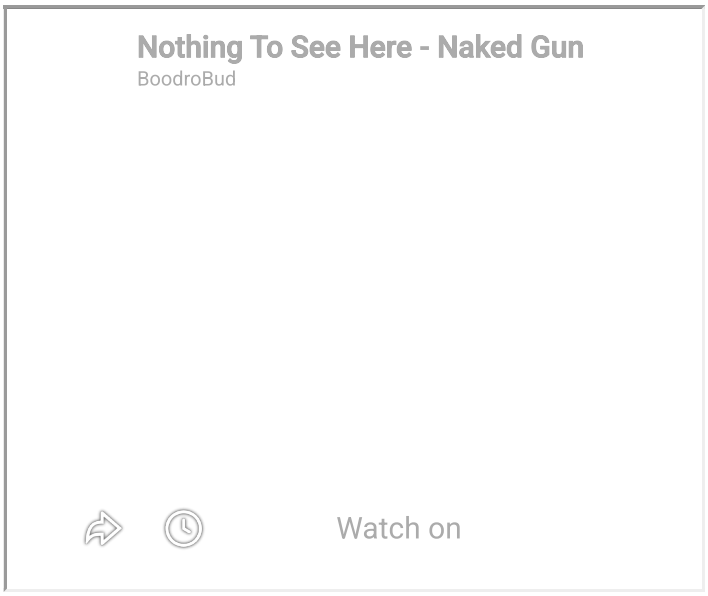

Federal updates
With numerous, quickly evolving federal policy shifts underway, the University of California is working diligently to monitor these developments and seek clarity on a range of issues. We remain committed to our UC values as stated in our Principles of Community, and we will continue to pursue UC's mission of teaching, research, and public service in the most effective ways we can. We recognize this uncertainty has caused concern across the UC community, and we will continue to share updates and resources as they become available.
For media inquiries (reporters only), please email media@ucop.edu.

Nothing to see here?



Or direct to https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5NNOrp_83RU.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:05 AM No comments:

Labels: politics, UC Regents

Monday, June 29, 2026

UC Retirement Savings Program(s)

Guide to Investing in the UC Retirement Savings Program: July 1, 2026

This class can help you understand the basics of investing with a focus on the UC Retirement Savings Program.

What will you learn in this seminar:

Basics of investing, including key investing concepts and common types of investments plus an overview of funds available through the UC Retirement Savings Program. It also includes investment approaches based on risk tolerance, investing horizon and involvement level.

Who should attend?

Still Ahead
Straws in the Wind - Part 370
Assembly Meeting Today
Revived
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Let's not forget about Canvas
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Another closed-door meeting coming up
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► 2022 (719)
► 2021 (710)
► 2020 (914)

Participants who want to learn how to invest and help grow savings in the UC Retirement Savings Program.

Upcoming Live Sessions

July 01 - 9:00 AM

July 17 - noon

July 27 - noon

Register at https://www.myucretirement.com/webinars/calendar.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:30 AM No comments:

Labels: uc retirement

Straws in the Wind - Part 387

From the NY Times: *College tuition will cost no more than 10 percent of parental adjusted gross income. That's it. Grab the figure from Line 11a of your 1040 form, and divide by 10. Starting today, those are the instructions for anyone interested in applying to Whitman College, a small liberal arts college in Walla Walla, Wash. The school is one of a small but growing number of institutions that are finally answering the extremely reasonable question that families have asked in vain for decades: Why can't you just tell us the price we'll pay without having to apply and get in first?*

...Last month, Brandeis University made a similar move by introducing a tool allowing prospective students and their families to upload tax forms and high school transcripts in exchange for a "you will pay" figure. What's in it for you is clear. What's in it for the schools may surprise you.

Whitman has seen a notable falloff in applications from the upper middle class. Many of those families have high enough incomes to disqualify themselves from much need-based financial aid, but they don't have enough money to afford the school's annual list price of close to $90,000. But even at a significant discount, often in the form of so-called merit aid, those families provide revenue that is above average for the school. Whitman, like a vast majority of colleges and universities, desperately wants its net tuition revenue per student to rise. It hopes to use transparency as a form of competitive advantage...

Full story at https://www.nytimes.com/2026/06/21/business/whitman-college-tuition-pricing.html.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:20 AM No comments:

Labels: Brandeis, tuition, Whitman College

The Davis Equestrian Program: Running the Clock

► 2019 (671)
► 2018 (595)
► 2017 (666)
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► 2015 (765)
► 2014 (704)
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► 2009 (12)

Contributors

- California Policy Issues
- Toby Higbie
- UCLA Faculty Association

As blog readers will know, we have been interested in the UC-Davis decision to cut its equestrian team.* It's not that your truly has any special interest in horses. But what strikes him about this story is its similarity to the tale of the Grand Hotel (Luskin Hotel and Conference Center) at UCLA back in the day. As really long-time readers will know, that tale began with a decision that appeared to have been made BEFORE a faulty report had been prepared that supposedly justified the project. That faulty report - along with a push-poll that was intended to show popular neighborhood approval of the project - was so bad that the notion of demolishing the Faculty Club (now University Club) to make way for the hotel had also to be abandoned.

But the project itself was simply moved to the center of the campus and then justified by a business plan that was withheld from public view until it had to be given to the Regents. The Regents initially rejected the campus plan - which itself is very rare action. But they eventually approved a modified version. The moral of this story seems to be that once the powers-that-be commit to an idea, even if flawed, it's very hard for anyone in authority in campus administration to admit error. Egos are involved, if nothing else. In one form or another, the project goes forward. The parents protesting the equestrian termination at UC-Davis are (re)discovering this lesson. From SFGATE:

It was an otherwise calm Friday in January when UC Davis officials called the equestrian team into a meeting with almost all of the school's athletic administration in attendance, alongside sports psychologists. At that moment, Zadie Stack, a sophomore at UC Davis from Santa Cruz, sent a distressing text message to her mother, Jen Landes: "Oh my god, Mom, I think they're going to cut the team." Landes could hardly believe what she had read. The UC Davis equestrian team was in the midst of an undefeated season in their conference, and was ranked No. 7 in the nation at the time. They won back-to-back conference championships in 2023 and 2024, won again in 2026, and took part in the NCEA national championships in 2019 — their inaugural season — and 2024. It was a celebrated program that gave her daughter a chance to continue the sport she loved closer to home after transferring from the University of Tennessee at Martin. The athletes themselves couldn't even imagine the possibility as they entered their team meeting room.

...But moments later, the unexpected became reality: After eight seasons as a varsity program for the Aggies, UC Davis Equestrian would be relegated from its status as a Division I sport and only be supported at the club level. Along with this stunning announcement, Trimble said that Davis' athletics department told the women on the team not to fight this because it'll be a lot harder for them if they do. This was presented as an open-and-shut case of simple accounting, a cold but calculated decision made after "detailed financial analysis and an independent assessment of the national competitive landscape," the school said in its initial announcement on Feb. 17. And in line with how other colleges across California have handled the aftermath of cutting college sports teams in recent years, UC Davis leadership is refusing to do interviews about the topic. UC Davis spokesperson James Nash declined to answer SFGATE's request for an update about the program's status.

But in April, the school acknowledged it is reviewing its own decision to cut the team after others accused the school of manipulating the numbers it used when making the decision. And now, only days remain until the program officially ceases to exist, with no word from the school on the status of that review. That there is this waiting period at all is because of the Aggie student-athletes and their parents, who formed a group called Keep Davis Riding to keep pressure on the school and the athletic department. From the start, many in the group felt the school's explanation didn't add up. Whether that was because one parent was still getting fundraising calls for the program shortly after this news broke or because the school allegedly wouldn't let the public see the data Davis referenced in its meeting with the student-athletes, they felt there were plenty of reasons to be suspicious.

UC Davis released a third-party report from Atlanta-based firm Collegiate Consulting that it used to inform its decision to cut equestrian on Feb. 17, about six weeks after the student-athletes learned they were losing their team. However, since Davis is a public school, it is subject to public records laws, and parents were able to receive additional information about the decision around that same time. And what the parents discovered only raised more red flags.

The most damning information they received in the documents, which the group shared with SFGATE, was that the athletic department began to consider cutting equestrian nearly a full year prior to its announcement. The university had tasked athletics with making a 10% cut to the department's budget (approximately $1.05 million), and the athletic department said in March 2025 that cutting equestrian would supposedly save the school $1.02 million. After a few months of deliberation, the official decision to cut the program was made in August — five whole months before the school informed the student-athletes — pending an external review.

In an emailed response to SFGATE..., Nash said the "final decision" to cut the program wasn't made until "shortly before" the Jan. 9 announcement. Documents SFGATE reviewed show a Dec. 18, 2025, email from athletic director Rocko DeLuca discussing the "previously aligned campus direction" about cutting the equestrian program and detailing precisely how UC Davis planned to message the decision on Jan. 9, a full 22 days later. In the cutthroat world of college recruiting and the transfer portal, both the students currently on the team and rising high schoolers recruited to Davis were left in the dark about the school's plans for weeks, if not months...

But when the parents looked deeper, they found what they felt were major flaws in the third-party report, which compared data to schools without equestrian programs. Collegiate Consulting counted the value of donated horses as part of the overall cost of the program at Davis. It also failed to account for out-of-state tuition as part of the revenue that the program brought into the university. By the parents' estimation, some of the costs were off by hundreds of thousands, and were reportedly 10 times higher than Fresno State, the only other California school with an equestrian team...

But when the parents looked deeper, they found what they felt were major flaws in the third-party report, which compared data to schools without equestrian programs. Collegiate Consulting counted the value of donated horses as part of the overall cost of the program at Davis. It also failed to account for out-of-state tuition as part of the revenue that the program brought into the university. By the parents' estimation, some of the costs were off by hundreds of thousands, and were reportedly 10 times higher than Fresno State, the only other California school with an equestrian team.

...When presented with these concerns, UC Davis announced on April 3 that an independent auditor would review the initial report it based its decision to cut the team on. But Keep Davis Riding wanted to independently confirm that their conclusions, and math, were sound. They hired an independent firm called OSKR to do their own audit of the report. OSKR's audit claimed the value of the donated horses was, in fact, counted under the program's expenses for $665,000. Another expense was the boarding fees that the team paid the university, which should have been considered an "internal transfer where the expense item burdened by the team is a revenue item for the school," the OSKR analysis said. Davis also reported that the team's direct overhead costs in 2024 were 45 times its average from 2019-2023, and the Collegiate Consulting report did not consider coaching salaries when comparing expenses to other Davis sports, OSKR said.

UC Davis reportedly overstated the equestrian team's expenses by more than $850,000, more than double its actual amount, OSKR argued. UC Davis had initially claimed the equestrian team was second among the school's 25 sports teams in terms of per-athlete spending. But without the overstated amount, OSKR's audit said the equestrian team was actually 15th.

...Initially, the parents felt equally vindicated in their efforts and hopeful that this could, in fact, be the final push to help save the program. But the celebrations could only last for so long. ...[The] announcement of an audit was 86 days ago, and UC Davis Chancellor Gary May told the school's student newspaper, the California Aggie, "It'll be completed by the end of June." But the school continues to provide no update to the status and, when asked by SFGATE when it expects to publish said audit, school spokesperson Nash said, "We'll release it to you once it's public."

The end of June also marks the end of the athletic school year, meaning the program will be officially demoted after June 30. According to Trimble, who served as an officer for the team, just three of the 40 riders were able to transfer to another program, leaving the remaining 37 without a D-I team to compete on and, in some cases, a scholarship...

Full story at https://www.sfgate.com/collegesports/article/uc-davis-cut-equestrian-22317870.php.

It appears, in short, that that administrative strategy in this case is to run the clock and thus "win" by default.

===

*https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/2026/06/want-of-horse.html.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:05 AM No comments:

Labels: athletics, faculty center, new hotel-conference center, UC-Davis, UCLA

Will Harvard Continue to Lead the Charge? - Part 174

From the Harvard Crimson: *A federal judge allowed most of a whistleblower lawsuit against Harvard to proceed..., letting two claims advance in a case accusing the University and a Harvard Catalyst principal investigator of misusing National Institutes of Health grant funding. The suit, filed by David S. Zielinski, the former executive director of Harvard Catalyst — formally the Harvard Clinical and Translational Science Center — alleges that the University and the center's founder, Lee M. Nadler, collected $275 million in NIH grants while abandoning or repurposing promised research work in violation of the False Claims Act. The lawsuit was filed in March 2024 and remained under seal while the Department of Justice reviewed the allegations until November 2025.*

U.S. District Judge Myong J. Joun rejected most of the University's motion to dismiss in his 28-page order, tossing one count of "reverse false claims" while allowing two claims alleging false claims and false records to advance. At the motion-to-dismiss stage, Joun did not rule on the truth of Zielinski's allegations, only that the surviving claims were sufficiently pleaded to proceed. Harvard has 14 days to answer the two surviving counts.

The NIH awards to the center are cooperative agreements, a funding mechanism under which NIH "expects to be substantially involved in carrying out the project." The University had argued that the court should "be skeptical" that the NIH "somehow missed that two-thirds of the work contemplated was never done," arguing NIH would have been able to make that determination by reviewing the annual reports and choosing whether to renew the grants.

Joun wrote that the University's arguments did not make the allegations "implausible" and that "the very purpose of those statements is to keep NIH in the dark" from the truth. He added that it would be a "futile effort" for the court to immediately compare all the reports with the allegations, noting that Nadler allegedly "used crafty grantsmanship to obscure their true usage of the funds." ...

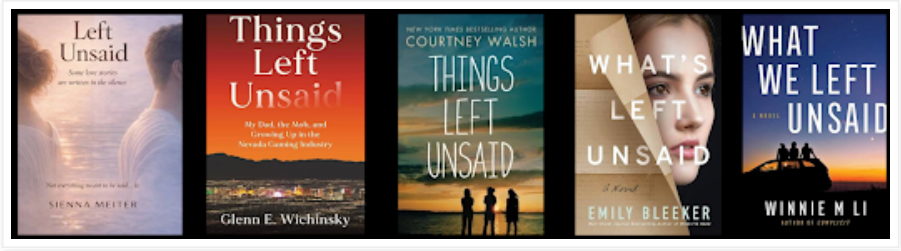
Full story at https://www.thecrimson.com/article/2026/6/28/nadler-catalyst-whistleblower-suit-ruling/.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:01 AM No comments:

Labels: Harvard, health care

Sunday, June 28, 2026

Left Unsaid



On the systemwide Academic Senate's website, there is a proposal for changes in procedures regarding supply-change management.* The proposal, which runs 100 pages, was posted in late May and comments are due by mid-July. Now yours truly suspects that this proposal will not be of great concern for the vast majority of Senate faculty. However, it might matter to some who, for example, administer grants in which purchasing is necessary, or possibly department chairs who have authority over departmental purchases.

The point is that it would be helpful if the Senate, rather than just posting such items to comply with bureaucratic procedures, provided some guidance to faculty as to whether matters such as this should be of concern, and indicated who those concerned might be. How about including a short paragraph highlighting what within the 100 pages is important, if anything? Just a suggestion...

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
Academic Senate
SEARCH
ABOUT »
UNDER REVIEW »
2016-17 TO 2020-21
2011-12 TO 2015-16
2006-07 TO 2010-11
PRIOR TO 2006-07
Under Review
Unless otherwise noted, send comments to your Divisional Chair or relevant Divisional Committee.
2025-26
Systemwide Review of Proposed Presidential Policy BFB-BUS-43 - Purchases of Goods and Services; Supply Chain Management PDF (Due July 14, 2026)

===

*https://senate.universityofcalifornia.edu/_files/underreview/bus-43-supply-chain-mgmt-may2026.pdf.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:30 AM No comments:

Labels: UC

Straws in the Wind - Part 386

From the Columbia Daily Spectator: *Columbia and Barnard have both finalized tuition increases for the 2026-27 academic year, leading to a total estimated cost of attendance over $100,000 for most students. Columbia will charge undergraduate students in Columbia College and the School of Engineering and Applied Science $72,800 in tuition—a 3.75 percent increase from the 2025-26 academic year, according to the University's financial aid office. A University official told Spectator that Columbia recently approved the increase, but did not respond to a request*

for comment on exactly when. Columbia's new rate reflects an increase by nearly 50 percent in undergraduate tuition since the 2014-15 academic year.

Barnard will charge students $73,120 in tuition next year, a 3.5 percent increase, Jennifer Fondiller, BC '88, vice president for enrollment and external affairs, and Sharon Hewitt Watkins, TC '02, vice president and chief financial officer, announced in a May 22 email to students. After these increases, Columbia's total estimated cost of attendance, not including travel expenses or health insurance charges, will reach $100,884 for continuing students and $99,774 for first-year students. Barnard's estimated cost of attendance, which does include travel expenses, will reach $103,000 for students living on campus and $86,572 for commuter students...

Full story at https://www.columbiaspectator.com/news/2026/06/17/columbia-barnard-raise-tuition-sending-cost-of-attendance-over-100000/.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:20 AM No comments:

Labels: Barnard, Columbia, tuition

The Climate Wasn't Right for a New Senate Committee

The systemwide Academic Senate decided not to create a standing committee on climate change. Below is a summary of its reasoning:

...All 10 Senate divisions and four systemwide committees (UCEP, UCPB, UCORP, and UCRJ) provided comments in response to the proposal to establish a systemwide Academic Senate Committee on Climate Change and Sustainability. In general, reviewers agreed that climate change and sustainability are important long-term priorities and that the Senate should play an active role in addressing them. Many emphasized UC's responsibility to provide leadership through research, education, and operations, and expressed support for improved coordination across campuses. However, there were mixed views on whether a new systemwide standing committee is the best mechanism to meet these goals.

While some reviewers supported the proposal as a way to increase coordination and provide a dedicated forum for faculty input into sustainability issues, many expressed skepticism. Several raised concerns that systemwide committees are usually organized around core functions rather than specific topics and that creating the committee could set a precedent for additional issuespecific committees.

A related concern was the potential redundancy with existing structures. Several reviewers pointed to the existing Senate committees and administrative bodies already engaged in sustainability efforts and questioned whether a new committee would add value or instead duplicate or fragment existing work. Some suggested that concentrating responsibility in a single committee could even reduce broader Senate engagement with climate issues.

Many reviewers noted that the proposal lacks clarity regarding the committee's charge, scope, and authority. They called for clearer delineation of responsibilities relative to existing committees, better definition of its advisory versus operational role, and more detail on how it would interact with campus-level structures and represent divisional perspectives.

Reviewers also questioned how a systemwide committee would align with campus-level structures, noting that most Senate divisions do not have a corresponding committee and instead rely on administrative bodies to address climate change and sustainability issues. In this context, UCRJ clarified that Senate Bylaw 325 requires each division to designate a corresponding committee for every Committee of the Assembly. As a result, approval of the presented proposal would effectively require each division to establish a parallel committee.

Reviewers also raised concerns that creating a new standing committee would increase faculty service obligations and require additional staffing and financial support, yet the proposal does not provide cost estimates or identify necessary resources. Several noted that committees are more often created than eliminated and suggested that any new committee should be accompanied by reductions elsewhere or supported with new resources.

Several reviewers expressed concerns about potential overreach into curriculum and educational policy. They emphasized that any systemwide body must respect divisional control over academic programs and preserve academic freedom and recommended explicitly clarifying these boundaries in the proposal.

Some reviewers expressed interest in alternative approaches, such as charging existing Senate committees; creating subcommittees, time-limited task forces, or a pool of experts; convening regular systemwide meetings to address relevant topics; or pursuing non-Senate structures.

In summary, reviewers agreed that climate change and sustainability are high priorities and that greater coordination across UC is desirable. Support for the proposal is concentrated among the proposing divisions (UCSF and UCSD) and one additional division (UCSB), while others either declined to support or expressed mixed views. As a result, there is no clear consensus in favor of establishing a new systemwide standing committee. The prevailing view is that the proposal requires further clarification and stronger justification, particularly around scope, added value, and resource requirements, before it could receive broad support.

Conclusion: Given the lack of consensus in support of establishing a new standing committee, Council decided not to advance the proposal. At the same time, the systemwide review identified several recommendations for strengthening and advancing Senate engagement and coordination on climate change and sustainability issues without creating a new standing committee...

Full report of 6-26-2026 at https://senate.universityofcalifornia.edu/_files/reports/proposed-sw-committee-climate-sustainability.pdf.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:10 AM No comments:

Labels: UC

Pleased with Bond

UC President James B. Milliken statement on the Veterans and Affordable Housing Bond Act of 2026

June 26, 2026

"*For many students and families, the challenge of attending college goes far beyond tuition and fees. It lies in the broader costs of attendance, of which housing is central. I'm grateful to the state Legislature for including housing for UC students in the affordable housing bond and to Governor Newsom for signing the legislation so Californians have a chance to vote for it on the November ballot. It's a vital step we can take to support our students and all Californians.*"

Source: https://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/press-room/uc-president-james-b-milliken-statement-veterans-and-affordable-housing-bond-act-2026.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:05 AM No comments:

Labels: governor, legislature, Milliken, UC

Saturday, June 27, 2026

Reminder: Stay Away from Wilshire

Wilshire Bl between Gayley Av and Westwood Bl: Sewer Service Entries

Summary

Construction along Wilshire Bl continues Friday, June 26 at 9 pm. Work will continue through 6 am on Monday, June 29. The same work will occur the weekends beginning on Friday, July 3 and Friday, July 10.

Work includes construction of sewer service entries at the southeast entrance of the Westwood/UCLA Station, supporting overall station construction.

Schedule

- 9 pm Friday, June 26 through 6 am Monday, June 29

Traffic Control

- Westbound Wilshire Bl will remain open with traffic control in place.
- Eastbound Wilshire Bl will be closed between Gayley Av/Midvale Av and Westwood Bl.
- Local traffic on eastbound Wilshire Bl will be detoured onto Gayley Av and Midvale Av.
- Thru traffic will be detoured to Santa Monica Bl via Federal Av.
- Detour routes will be marked with signage.
- Lane reductions on Veteran Av north and south of Wilshire Bl.
- Closure of southbound left-turn pocket on Gayley Av onto Wilshire Bl.
- Closure of northbound right-turn pocket on Midvale Av onto Wilshire Bl.

Pedestrian and Business Access

- Sidewalk closures will be in place in the immediate work area; pedestrians should follow posted detour signage.

Closure:

Detour:

Noteworthy

- All work has received necessary permits and approvals.
- Access for emergency responders will be maintained at all times.
- Parking restrictions will be enforced in the work zone.

Metro Access

- Metro bus stops may be relocated, or lines could be impacted. For more information on changes to Metro service, please call 323.GoMetro.

Source: https://cloud.sfmc.metro.net/CN_Wilshire_Gayley.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 9:18 AM No comments:

Labels: traffic, UCLA

Now there is a deal

When we last posted about the status of state budget negotiations (yesterday), there was no final deal. But now there is, according to the governor:

https://www.gov.ca.gov/2026/06/26/finalbudget/.

You can read the news release at the link above. However, until we have actual numbers (which may take some time), don't take the flowery description literally.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 8:29 AM No comments:

Labels: governor, legislature, politics, State Budget

Dialog Program

The UC National Center for Free Speech and Civic Engagement is partnering with the UC Office of the President's Graduate, Undergraduate and Equity Affairs and Institutional Research and Academic Planning to launch a pilot fellowship program for UC faculty and staff. Through $5,000 awards, the UC Dialogue Fellows Program supports the teaching of dialogue skills in the curricular context.* Applications will open on July 6, 2026. In the meantime, you can share your interest in the program by filling out a form.**

Michelle N. Deutchman
Executive Director

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*https://freespeechcenter.universityofcalifornia.edu/uc-dialogue-fellows-program/.

**https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSe9ozG6Fv1aSMN-7T2Ph76ND51ftGKYXsV0lqxaKlg8wx4oYQ/viewform.

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Source: https://mailchi.mp/a0db658dc270/new-monthly-newsletter-from-the-center-16567764.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:30 AM No comments:

Labels: academic freedom, UC

Straws in the Wind - Part 385

From the Chronicle of Higher Education: *In what's becoming a familiar exercise, the Kansas Board of Regents just spent weeks wrestling over how to define "diversity, equity, and inclusion/critical race theory" content that cannot be part of required courses under a new state law. The final definition... leaves substantial room for discussions about race in public university classrooms, while still raising prickly questions about what faculty can and can't teach. Discussions among Kansas education leaders had focused on how exactly to expel certain presentations of "DEI" content and systemic racism from mandatory courses. The final policy was broadened to cover a wider range of courses, in part a nod to lawmakers' intent, while also narrowing the scope with explicit carveouts for teaching about race.*

Under the initial proposal, presented to the board by its general counsel John Yeary in May, the "CRT" element of the restriction on "DEI-CRT-related content" encompassed "content that defines a conceptual framework, as the single and authoritative lens, establishing racism to be systemic within laws, policies, or institutions." The final version instead defines CRT material as "content that presents racism as systemic within laws, policies, or institutions and promotes acceptance of that viewpoint rather than presenting it as a subject of scholarly, historical, or

legal study." Then there are caveats: "Discussions of race, racism, or the history of the civil rights movement" do not in themselves meet that definition...

Full story at https://www.chronicle.com/article/professors-can-teach-about-race-in-kansas-if-they-follow-these-rules.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:20 AM No comments:

Labels: diversity, politics, U of Kansas

Research Initiative

From the Sacramento Bee: *An initiative seeking to fund immunology and immunotherapy research through an $8.4 billion state bond [has] qualified... for the November ballot... The Trump administration's cuts and freezes to thousands of medical research grants last year prompted Californians to develop the statewide funding proposal... The measure directs half of the bond proceeds to a single nonprofit immunology research institute affiliated with the University of California. The initiative's principal financial backer, billionaire philanthropist and medical inventor Gary Michelson, pledged $120 million in 2024 to launch the California Institute for Immunology and Immunotherapy, a UCLA-affiliated research center expected to open in 2027...*

Full story at https://www.sacbee.com/news/politics-government/capitol-alert/article316259099.html.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:10 AM No comments:

Labels: politics, UCLA

Friday, June 26, 2026

No Deal (yet)

The legislature passed something called a "budget" in time to meet the constitutional deadline. But, as blog readers will know, it isn't really final. Negotiations between legislative Democrats - Republicans play no role in the Dem-dominated legislature - and the governor are still ongoing.

Jason Sisney of LAO reports on his blog that there is as yet no deal. He also reports a deal is likely by June 29 in time for much of the actual budget to be passed before July 1, the start of the new fiscal year, although some clean-up legislation will follow over the summer.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 7:39 AM No comments:

Labels: governor, legislature, politics, State Budget

Hearing Problem?

From the Daily Californian: *Faculty advocating for the reinstatement of SAT and ACT requirements are criticizing the timeline produced by the UC system's Academic Senate to revisit its standardized testing policies, saying the process is moving too slowly. The UC Board of Admissions and Relations with Schools, approved a roadmap June 5 outlining its plan to research potential changes to admissions policy. The committee formed two work groups: One will study the efficacy of standardized testing in first-year admissions, and the other will look at the UC's "A-G" course requirement for California first-year applicants. If approved by the UC Board of Regents, changes would affect fall 2028 applicants at the earliest, one year later than called for in a petition signed by more than* ***1,500 UC STEM faculty****...*

*Electrical engineering and computer sciences chair Jelani Nelson argued the process was redundant, and the topic was already thoroughly researched by UC faculty on the Academic Council's Standardized Testing Task Force in 2020... Nelson said the proposal felt "****tone-deaf****" given the urgency of UC faculty's calls for more rigor in the admissions process...*

Full story at https://www.dailycal.org/news/uc/tone-deaf-uc-faculty-criticize-fall-2028-timeline-for-potential-reimplementation-of-standardized-test-scores/article_2c5ecf03-34de-4e32-824a-6a3e11eaa39c.html.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:30 AM No comments:

Labels: admissions, UC

Straws in the Wind - Part 384

From the NY Times: *The videos are all over social media, making students an irresistible offer: Go ahead and let A.I. do your homework — with the latest technology, you won't get caught. These kinds of tutorials are now pervasive on TikTok and YouTube. They show students how to use tools known as humanizers and autotypers, which make it easier than ever to cheat. The videos — sometimes labeled ads, sometimes not — target college and high school students.*

Humanizers rewrite A.I.-produced text to make it sound less robotic, formulaic and trite. Autotypers slowly drip words and sentences into documents, making it appear as if papers were typed at a human pace when in fact, they were produced by A.I. They even fabricate typos, deletions and revisions. Both tools can help students evade software designed to detect A.I.

Colleges and K-12 schools are trying to keep up, with A.I. detection becoming a significant expense. But educators attempting to restrict the technology, worried about students failing to develop basic skills, are often lagging in what tech-industry leaders are calling a detection arms race. In some cases, the very same companies selling detection tools are also making apps that allow students to cheat, including by writing papers for them or rephrasing text written by others. The apps promise to help them avoid accusations of misconduct by scanning their work before they submit it, allowing them to rewrite passages identified as A.I. Even honest students are often willing to fork over $10 to $20 per month for premium tools, since A.I. detectors sometimes flag legitimate work...

Full story at https://www.nytimes.com/2026/06/18/us/ai-apps-students-cheat.html.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:20 AM No comments:

Labels: plagiarism

We got something (maybe)

As blog readers will know, UC has been pushing for two bond measures: one would provide research funding and the other would provide some money for student housing (along with other funding for housing more generally).

Both bonds would require legislative approval and then voter approval. And the housing bond in particular might or might not have included UC funding. But now it apparently does. As part of an $11 billion housing bond, there is this provision:

Three hundred fifty million dollars ($350,000,000) to be appropriated by the Legislature for new affordable student housing projects. This funding shall be split evenly among the University of California and the California State University. Funded student housing projects shall meet the terms specified in subdivision (f) of Section 17201 of the Education Code. For these projects, the University of California and California State University shall meet the accountability and reporting requirements specified in subdivisions (i) and (o) of Section 17201 of the Education Code.

Full text at https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=202520260SB417.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:10 AM No comments:

Labels: CSU, legislature, politics, State Budget, UC

Thursday, June 25, 2026

Denial

Blog readers will know a) over half of the Medicare-eligible population is now in privatized Medicare Advantage plans, and b) at one time UCOP pushed to have all folks under retiree health insurance in Medicare Advantage, but pulled back when there was resistance, c) Medicare Advantage premiums for retirees tend to be cheaper than traditional Medicare-plus-supplement arrangements.

Medicare Advantage plans often offer extras such as gym memberships to attract participants. But the issue is what happens when someone has a serious health issue and needs expensive care. Newsweek finds high denial rates in Medicare Advantage plans, but persistent appeals will often reverse the denial:

Private Medicare plans are denying requests for specialized medical care at widely varying rates. In some cases, denial rates were strikingly high, especially for some of the largest Medicare Advantage companies: CVS Health/Aetna, Humana and UnitedHealth Group, according to a new inspector general report.

Some of these insurers, while being some of the most prominent in the U.S., routinely reject requests for post-hospital care such as rehabilitation and long-term treatment

- Check plan rules carefully for post-hospital care
- Be prepared for prior authorization requirements
- Consider appealing any denial, as reversal rates can be high

- Compare plans not just on premiums—but on coverage rules and approval patterns...

Full story at https://www.newsweek.com/medicare-plans-compared-based-on-denial-rates-for-specialized-care-12075121.

What this story is saying is that when a health crunch occurs under a Medicare Advantage plan, you may get treatment denial - although after a hassle, the negative decision might be reversed. It would be worth tracking whether that has been the experience under the Medicare Advantage offerings of UC.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:30 AM No comments:

Labels: health care, UC

Straws in the Wind - Part 383

From the Daily Princetonian: *Clinicians in the University's mental and behavioral health Exclusive Provider Network (EPN), a network of local clinicians subsidized by the University to provide counseling to Princeton students, will see cuts to their rates for their services. Starting August 1, rates will decrease by 48 percent for psychiatric diagnostic evaluations, and by 7 percent for 60-minute follow-up sessions. The reduced rates will be lower than 2019 EPN rates for most services and treatments.*

This decision comes amid budget cuts driven by lower endowment return projections. Of the roughly 228 clinicians currently in the EPN, 76 percent have confirmed they will remain in the network for the upcoming year...

Full story at https://www.dailyprincetonian.com/article/2026/06/princeton-news-adpol-slashes-reimbursement-rates-external-mental-health-clinicians-epn.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:10 AM No comments:

Labels: Princeton U

An illusion of prudence?

As blog readers will know, yours truly often cautions about the verbiage attached to state budget accounting. Words such as deficit and surplus are often used in "flexible" ways that obscure what they actually mean.

California has a budget reserve often referred to as the "rainy day" fund. The state legislature is now considering a bill that would allow more money to be deposited into the rainy day fund.* That sounds like a prudent idea. But as we have pointed out in prior budgetary analysis, there are several reserves associated with the state's general fund. What matters is whether total reserves are rising or falling.

Thus, when politicians point to putting money into the rainy day fund as a Good Thing, it is always necessary to find out what is

happening to total reserves since the rainy day fund is only a part of the total. If the rainy day fund goes up while the total is going down, that is a deficit.

Just keep that in mind. And note that it would take a two-thirds vote of both legislative houses to pass the bill and put the issue on the ballot. Voters would then have to approve it.

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*https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=202520260ACA20.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:10 AM No comments:

Labels: legislature, politics, State Budget

Wednesday, June 24, 2026

Want of a Horse

Faithful blog readers who follow our coverage of Regents meetings, and public comments therein, will know that a brouhaha at Davis has developed over the discontinuation of the equestrian program there. From the Chronicle of Higher Education:

This academic year, the women's equestrian team at the University of California at Davis completed a dominant season, winning all five of its conference matches and its third conference championship. But in January, with no warning, the university announced it was cutting equestrian as an intercollegiate sport. The decision came too late for team members to transfer to another program. Some incoming students who'd been recruited as athletes were denied regular admission to UC-Davis, several parents said, leaving them with no college to attend at all.

To justify their decision, university officials used a faulty report, supporters allege, riddled with errors and written by a consulting firm that recently stirred controversy for a similar analysis at another university. What's more, administrators privately signaled nearly a year ahead of the announcement that they were planning to eliminate equestrian, according to emails obtained by the supporters' group via a public-records request and shared with The Chronicle. At the same time, athletics officials continued to recruit athletes and solicit donations to support the team until shortly before they announced the team was being cut.

...Advocates are pursuing legal remedies — including a lawsuit in state court alleging that the athletics director and others engaged in fraudulent activity by misleading the recruits and assuring coaches, families, and students that the program was continuing. A parent with close knowledge of the situation told The Chronicle that a detective with the university's police department was also investigating possible wire fraud, because the university continued to solicit donations for the team after it had effectively chosen to shutter it.

And a lawyer has warned the university that cutting the equestrian team could run afoul of Title IX, which requires gender equity in athletic expenditures and participation. The lawyer, Arthur Bryant, won a landmark settlement in April against San Diego State University for failing to provide as much in athletic scholarships to women as it paid to men. A university spokesperson declined to make anyone available to discuss the equestrian team because of the legal challenges. An earlier university statement said campus leaders believed they followed the proper procedures, but they were conducting a review "to evaluate financial records and reporting practices to determine whether expenses were accurately represented to decision-makers and other appropriate authorities."

At a time when many colleges are considering cuts in athletics, UC-Davis is a case study in how missteps and poor communication can lead to legal risks and tense conflict with athletes and their parents, who have spent years and small fortunes pursuing dreams of intercollegiate sports...

Full story at https://www.chronicle.com/article/a-university-halts-its-top-ranked-equestrian-team-spurring-an-uproar.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:30 AM No comments:

Labels: athletics, UC-Davis

Straws in the Wind - Part 382

From Inside Higher Ed: *The state of Minnesota this month launched the SELF Grad Loan program, a new low-interest loan option for grad students that offers fixed rates based not on their credit score but on whether the loan has a co-signer and which repayment term the borrower chooses: 10, 15 or 20 years.* ***Officials created the program in direct response to the federal government's elimination of Grad PLUS loans and caps on certain other federal loans, which go into effect July 1.***

"The elimination of the Federal Grad PLUS Loan, which offered loans that covered up to the full cost of attendance, and lower caps for all Federal loans indicated a need for a new, low-interest loan option for graduate students," a spokesperson for Minnesota's Office of Higher Education wrote in an email. "Our SELF Grad Loan was launched to provide that option to students." Minnesota is now the second state, after Connecticut, to devise its own loan program to help fill funding gaps for graduate students. As of Tuesday, 35 colleges and universities in Minnesota had joined the state's program...

Full story at https://www.insidehighered.com/news/quick-takes/2026/06/17/minnesota-launches-graduate-student-loan-program.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:20 AM No comments:

Labels: politics

Berkeley Swim Case On Again

Remember that lawsuit about abuse of the women's swim team at Berkeley?* After an earlier ruling that the statute of limitations had run out, a higher court has now reinstated the suit. Big bucks could be involved. A reminder that UCLA athletics provides a significant subsidy to Berkeley athletics, pursuant to a decision of the Regents after UCLA switched athletics conference. From the Daily Cal:

A lawsuit from 18 former Cal swimmers alleging former women's head coach Teri McKeever verbally and psychologically abused them was granted a second life after a California court of appeal ruled last week that the statute of limitations did not bar their claims. The suit, Touhey v. Regents of the University of California, alleges that the university failed to protect them from McKeever's abuse despite numerous complaints from swimmers and family members to administration throughout nearly all of McKeever's 30-year tenure as coach.

"Given how much Coach McKeever was promoted within the swimming community and the constant reminders of Cal's Olympic heritage, Plaintiffs felt that enduring her abuse was the price they paid to be on an elite team," the original complaint alleges. "Plaintiffs began to believe that they (were) subjected to degrading treatment because they were not living up to the Cal standards of excellence."

UC Berkeley filed a demurrer on Touhey v. Regents to claim the two-year statute of limitations expired when the lawsuit was filed in 2023, as the plaintiffs were members of Cal women's swim and dive at various times between 2000 and 2020. A demurrer is a response in a court proceeding in which the defendant does not dispute the truth of the allegation but claims it is not sufficient grounds to justify legal action.

While originally sustained by the court, it was overturned June 16 on appeal due to the discovery rule, because UC Berkeley administrators allegedly signaled to the swimmers McKeever's coaching was praiseworthy. The court claims this, along with the coach-athlete power dynamic, led the athletes to think that abuse was standard — albeit challenging — coaching, meaning the swimmers could not reasonably identify her actions as abuse...

Full story at https://www.dailycal.org/news/campus/administration/court-revives-former-cal-swimmers-lawsuit-alleging-coach-s-abuse/article_35360890-98e6-4be4-b0d5-5fc4c3d1895c.html.

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*https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/2025/06/bad-pr.html; https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/2023/12/swimming-in-scandal-part-10.html.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:10 AM No comments:

Labels: athletics, UC-Berkeley, UCLA

Tuesday, June 23, 2026

Together

From the UCLA Newsroom: *The 24 educators from the Middle East arrived at UCLA with two objectives: to share their experience building school communities where students can thrive amid turmoil, and to immerse themselves in the innovative centers of learning that Los Angeles has to offer.*

The delegation came from the Amal Educational Network, which enrolls 30,000 students representing Jewish, Muslim, Druze, Christian and Bedouin communities across Israel. The network prioritizes academic excellence in settings that build personal resilience, civic responsibility and democratic values that bridge cultural divides.

"These schools are building peace through education. And so far, the data show it is working, even during war," said ***Ron Avi Astor, professor of social welfare at the UCLA Luskin School of Public Affairs, who has a joint appointment with the UCLA School of Education and Information Studies (SEIS).*** *Astor organized the May 31–June 7 educational exchange in partnership with Mona Khoury, professor and vice president of strategy and diversity at Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and Karen Tal, superintendent and CEO of the Amal network.*

A long-term research project led by Astor and Khoury is measuring the impact of the network's 50 middle and high schools, and how its model can be scaled up across the Middle East. These case studies highlight Amal's holistic curriculum weaving core academic subjects together with

the arts, cutting-edge technology and volunteerism. It's a formula that brings students of different backgrounds together more effectively than one-off cultural events or dialogues, the researchers found.

The visiting principals and professionals came from the Jewish, Muslim and Druze communities, but their schools represent the rich diversity of cultures across Israel. They shared challenges and success stories that held lessons not just for schools in conflict zones but for any campus seeking to create a stable and supportive climate free of violence, bullying and bias.

One case study focused on a remarkable partnership between two schools: Achva Gilboa, which is largely Arab Muslim, and Emek Harod, which serves students from Arab Muslim and Christian communities, secular and Orthodox Jewish traditions, and kibbutzim.

The schools host joint classes that bring students and teachers together on robotics projects, 3D printing and hackathons, and a documentary filmmaking option offers students the opportunity to express feelings of identity and belonging. Problem-solving with the most sophisticated technological tools draws students together, no matter what their backgrounds are, the educators said.

Amal schools also address polarization within cultural groups. Different Palestinian Muslim communities have distinct traditions, for example, and at Achva Gilboa, hundreds of grandmothers have come to campus to speak about their values and rituals. Students are now visiting the villages they learned about through their elders.

Technology and science education are prized at Amal schools, and the delegation's itinerary included several treks to hubs of innovation including NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory, the Getty Center, UCLA Lab School and Milken Community School.

In keeping with UCLA's commitment to expand its global reach, the exchange invited leaders from schools across Southern California, as well as from groups including Holocaust Museum LA, Jewish Federation Los Angeles and the Holy Land Democracy Project, to join scholars and students in the cross-border dialogue.

Added Amal Falah, an administrator at an Amal school serving the Druze community, "We arrived as visitors and leave as partners in a shared mission: shaping a better future through education."

"This was a transformative week," Astor said as the exchange wrapped up. "These educators got to know each other as professionals, friends and partners in using their academic settings to educate the next generation toward peace rather than polarization, demonization and hate."

The educational exchange grew out of research by Astor and Khoury into the cultural context of school safety — scholarship that has taken them around the world, to Asia, Africa, Europe, the Mideast and the Americas.

The current research project by UCLA, Hebrew University and Amal is powerful, Khoury said. "The principals are doing the hard work. We are highlighting how they got to where they are and where they go in the future, for others to learn from."

The research is supported by the Rosalinde and Arthur Gilbert Foundation, which also sponsored the UCLA educational research exchange along with Gary Jacobs, trustee of the Rose and James Meltzer Trust, UCLA Luskin, UCLA SEIS and an anonymous donor.

Source: https://newsroom.ucla.edu/stories/building-peace-through-education-research-exchange-jewish-muslim-druze. [Photos in original.]

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:30 AM No comments:

Labels: diversity, UCLA

Straws in the Wind - Part 381

From the Dallas Morning Herald: *All University of Texas System schools have complied with a 2023 ban on diversity, equity and inclusion offices, according to a recent state audit. Many UT schools, including UTD, laid off staff, altered programming and restructured their offices to comply with the law when it first went into effect in 2024. Texas Senate Bill 17 prohibits public universities from having any DEI-related offices, trainings or hiring practices, but explicitly does not touch academic instruction or research. The law requires every school be audited for compliance at least once every four years. If a school is found non-compliant and does not rectify the issue within 180 days of the audit, then it is ineligible for state funding increases and other benefits...*

The UT System was the second major university system to be audited for SB 17 compliance. In an audit of the Texas A&M University System last year, the state found the system's Killeen location violated the law by working with a third party to "perform certain duties" of a DEI office. The university agreed with the finding and implemented a corrective action plan. The DEI ban is also enforced through the Office of the Ombudsman in the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, where people can submit complaints about potential violations...

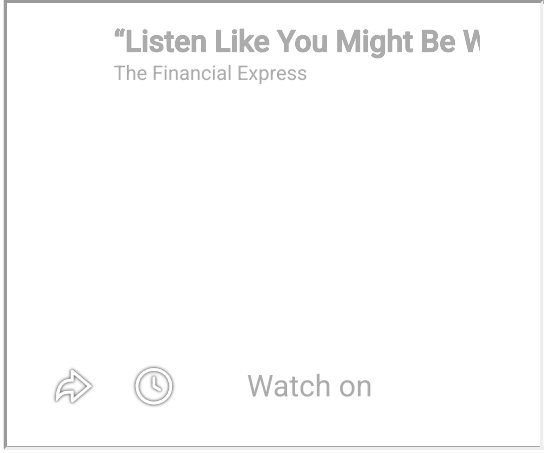
Full story at https://www.dallasnews.com/news/education/article/ut-system-complies-diversity-equity-inclusion-ban-22301897.php.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:20 AM No comments:

Labels: diversity, politics, Texas A and M, U of Texas

Will Harvard Continue to Lead the Charge? - Part 173 (Graduation Speech)

Graduation speech: May 2026:



Or direct to https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VAVp7i2MGE0. Alternate location: https://dn600309.us.archive.org/0/items/a-laugh-a-tear-a-mitzvah/%E2%80%9CListen%20Like%20You%20Might%20Be%20Wrong%E2%80%9D%20%20Harvard%20Student%E2%80%99s%20Graduation%20speech%205-2026.mp4.

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Transcript of a Harvard Commencement address at Harvard Yard on 28 May 2026 by Noah Eckstein:

My life begins with something that could be the start of a joke. And it goes like this. A Christian, a Muslim, and a Jew walk into a bar. I know historically the setup is a little bit dicey, but this time this time was a little bit different. This time the Christian married the Muslim and they had a daughter. That daughter grew up Christian until she met the Jew, converted to Judaism, married the Jew, and had a son. 22 years later, that son is standing here with all of you graduating from Harvard University. [applause] [cheering] [applause]

I am a proud Jew. I’m also the proud grandson of a Christian and the proud grandson of a Muslim. But that isn’t a contradiction in any sense of the word. It’s proof of a concept. And that concept is what I want to talk to you all about today. Because my family taught me something I think this world could really use right now, which is that the counter to division isn’t necessarily agreement. It’s understanding.

Our world today all the way from the global stage to right here at Harvard has been split into two sides. There are two sides to every story. Of course, only two sides. Two sides to every conflict, argument, disagreement, good and bad, give and take, right and left, progressive and conservative, capitalist and communist, oppressor and oppress, rich and poor, US and China, US and Russia, Russia and Ukraine, Israel and Palestine, Israel and Iran, US and Iran, US and Israel and Iran. All in binaries. At least they’re presented to us in terms of binaries.

Here’s this issue. What do you think? What side are you on? Come on. Where do you stand? Who do you stand with in my family? Well, my family wouldn’t exist with that kind of approach. My grandfather’s one, a Pakistani Muslim who grew up in the middle of the Indo-pakistani war of 1947. The other a Jewish refugee of the Holocaust, met many times over the course of their lives. As you might imagine, they disagreed on a great many things. And yet, one of the main memories I have of them growing up was seeing them sitting together at a coffee table, discussing everything under the sun.

And when they weren’t in close proximity, I remember hearing their voices over the phone as they called my parents, always remembering at the end of each call to ask about the other, how they were doing, what were they up to. Of course, there are many differences that they never resolved. But still, they acknowledged each other. They cared for each other. They stayed in contact and they debated with each other. Their vast disparity in life experience, viewpoints, ideology, faith, and beliefs a point of contention, yes, but not a point of division.

And yet, somewhere in between their generation and ours, something in the conversation shifted. The debates got louder. The noise got louder. The listening stopped. It got harder. On the news, on your timeline, at the dinner table, people speaking without listening. People arguing, having already decided their own allegiances. People debating not to listen, understand, or to learn, but to win, to humiliate, to be right. And somewhere along the way, the person sitting across the table stopped being a person and became an obstacle.

Now, some would say that there are in fact people in this world for whom understanding is neither owed nor even worth the attempt. People whose very irredeemable actions or beliefs

place them beyond the reach of dialogue. People who indeed have become nothing more than obstacles to the greater good. And maybe that's true. Well, my grandfathers survived the atrocities of war and worse. And they knew better than anyone that people can do monstrous things. They also knew the most terrifying fact of all which that the peoples doing those monstrous things, they were human. Not forgivable, not necessarily redeemable, but human. Terrifyingly so. And it's precisely because of that human capacity that understanding them mattered. Dialogue still mattered. Not necessarily dialogue in the sense of extending grace or providing a platform but again understanding asking how did they get to this point? How did they reach this conclusion? Why do they believe this?

Asking these questions in this context holds a light up to the darkest parts of what it means to be human and as such we have to grapple with them. But such questions, necessary questions, important questions are not only reserved for the darkest parts of human history. If such questions of understanding, why do they believe this? If such questions of understanding matter that much at that extreme of humanity, how much more do they matter for the people sitting around you right now? For that family member at Thanksgiving that you stop bringing certain topics up around. For that person on the internet that says things from a viewpoint that seems kind of unimaginable sometimes. For that student in section that you smiled at once and said interesting point and then went back to your dorm and complained about to your roommate. Or for that one friend that you started to phase out because they said some things once that just didn't sit quite right with you. Take about 8 billion of those people, put them together and you get our world.

Many of us who come to Harvard have dreams of changing the world, of leaving an impact. But you cannot change a world that you refuse to understand, to talk to. You cannot convince someone of something if you do not understand them first. Peace through understanding can survive conflict, while peace through agreement lasts only as long as everyone keeps agreeing. In most cases, understanding is difficult. Sometimes you have to fight for it. Sometimes you have to fight yourself and your own beliefs first before you can truly achieve it. It takes effort. My grandfathers knew that. But they chose to try anyway.

So, as we all go out into an increasingly troubled world and divided world, I want to leave you all with one simple practice. Whenever you meet someone you disagree with, state your case. Yes. Stand up for what you believe in. Absolutely. But also ask the other person about their beliefs. Ask them how they got there. Place yourself in their shoes and ask why do I believe this? Listen like you might be wrong. That is not a weakness or betrayal of your own ideals. That is the hardest and most important thing you can do in a world that is constantly telling you pick a side.

I told you my life begins like a joke. Well, my Muslim grandfather was buried facing Mecca. My Jewish grandfather was buried in accordance with Jewish law. My Christian grandmother was buried with the cross. In a way, the punchline never really came. There was no resolution to the setup. They were all very stubborn and they held on to their own ideals and traditions until the very end. But still they respected each other. They chose each other and at the end of the day they were proud to be of one family.

Look around you right now. Look at the people around you. The person to your right, the person to your left. You're sitting now amongst people of every belief and every background. A family that we have built over the years here at Harvard. Do we agree on everything? Ask the section kid. Will we ever agree on everything? Certainly not. The world beyond these walls, it has all the same disagreements, the same differences of opinion, the same divisions that we have. But I urge you, see the people in your class for who they are as people. Fight to understand them and their beliefs just as much as you stand up and fight for your own. And after you walk through the gates of this yard for the first time as Harvard graduates, do the same for the people of our world. Because in a time this complicated and this divided, understanding and a genuine willingness to look a little bit deeper is how those divisions start to heal. Thank you all and congratulations to the class of 26. [applause]

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